

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

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FOL REPEAT GENEVA 3046 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BANGKOK

GOV/GUAM CINCPAC APRIL 30, 1975

QUOTE

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EO: 11652: N/A

TAGS/SREF, ICEM

SUBJ: ECEM - INDOCHINA REFUGEE ASSISTANCE

REF: A. STATE 099862; B. STATE 099387

1. CARLIN AND WIESNER MET WITH ECEM DIRECTOR THOMAS AND SENIOR MEMBERS ICEM STAFF APRIL 30 TO DISCUSS ICEM ROLE IN RESETTLING REFUGEES FROM INDOCHINA. REFUGEE GROUPS FROM CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM WERE DISCUSSED SEPARATELY.

2. WITH REFERENCE TO KHMER REFUGEES, THOMAS REFERRED TO ECEM TEAM IN THAILAND AND SAID THAT IF NECESSARY THEY COULD OPERATE IN BOTH BANGKOK AND AT UTAPAO. THOMAS SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT AMEMBASSY BANGKOK WAS TAKING STEPS TO SORT OUT REFUGEES, HAVE THEM MEDICALLY EXAMINED AND ASSIGNING THEM TO VOLUNTARY AGENCIES. HE POINTED OUT THAT SOME VOLUNTARY AGENCIES SUCH AS THE AMERICAN FUND FOR CZECHOSLOVAK REFUGEES AND TOLSTOY FOUNDATION HAVE DIFFI-

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CULTY IN HANDLING LARGE FAMILIES. ECEM, THEREFORE, RECOMMENDS

THAT COUPLES OR UNATTACHED INDIVIDUALS BE ASSIGNED TO THESE AGENCIES LEAVING LARGER REFUGEE FAMILY UNITS TO OTHER VOLAGS. MIS- SION CONCURS AND RECOMMENDS THAT AMEMBASSY BANGKOK COORDINATE WITH LOCAL ICEM TEAM ON THE ASSIGNMENT OF CASES TO VOLAGS.

3. WASHINGTON DECISION NEEDED URGENTLY AS TO WHETHER THESE MOVE- MENTS WILL BE ON LOAN OR GRANT BASIS. TASK FORCE WILL RECALL THAT VOLAGS UNANIMOUSLY FAVOR GRANTS. ECEM IS ENDEAVORING ARRANGE FIRST CHARTER FLIGHT TO PENDLETON MAY 3 AND SECOND FLIGHT MAY 4 (REFTEL B REFERS).

4. ECEM UNDERSTANDS FROM VOLAGS THAT IF ECEM REPRESENTATIVES IN THAILAND CAN PROVIDE ADVANCE INFORMATION ABOUT EACH INDIVIDUAL FAMILY INCLUDING OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION, THESE REFUGEES MIGHT BE MOVED DIRECT TO FINAL DESTINATIONS RATHER THAN THROUGH STAGING AREA. WE SUGGEST THAT DEPARTMENT CHECK THIS OUT WITH VOLAGS AND INFORM BANGKOK AND GENEVA ACCORDINGLY. THIS REGARD ICEM REPORTS THAT COMMERCIAL AIRLINE SPACE AVAILABLE FROM BANGKOK TO HONG KONG AND THAT ICEM CAN OBTAIN SPECIAL 50 PERCENT REFUGEE RATE FROM HONG KONG TO USA.

5. WE EXPLAINED LIMITS OF US RESPONSIBILITY POINTING OUT THAT USG DOES NOT RPT NOT ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THOSE KHMERS WHO CAME ACROSS BORDER ON OWN STEAM OR BY MEANS OTHER THAN US AIRLIFT. IT WAS AGREED, SUBJECT TO WASHINGTON CONFIRMATION, THAT USG WOULD PAY ICEM FOR TRANSPORT TO FRANCE AND OTHER COUNTRIES OF THOSE IN REFUGEE CATEGORY WHO HAD BEEN EVACUATED BY THE US. IF THE RTG REQUESTS ICEM HELP IN MOVING OTHER THAN US EVACUEES, RTG WOULD BE EXPECTED TO MAKE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION AND ANY US CONTRIBUTION WOULD PROBABLY REPRESENT NO MORE THAN AMOUNT WE MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO OTHER ICEM SPONSORED REFUGEE MOVEMENTS ELSEWHERE IN WORLD.

6. RESPECT VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, WE STRESSED USG'S INTEREST IN HAVING ICEM TAKE ALL POSSIBLE MEASURES TO DEVELOP PERMANENT RE- SETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAXIMUM NUMBER IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN USA. WE INFORMED ICEM OF OUR SIMILAR REQUEST TO UNHCR, AND THAT US AMBASSADORS AROUND WORLD WERE INSTRUCTED TO MAKE APPROACHES THIS REGARD BILATERALLY. THOMAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO BE RESPONSIVE BUT EXPLAINED THAT SUCH ACTION WOULD BE CONTINGENT ON LACK OF SUB- STANTIAL OBJECTIONS BY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER GOVERNMENTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO ICEM'S INVOLVEMENT THIS EFFORT. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ICEM HAS SENT FORMAL NOTIFICATION TO EXECCOMM MEMBERS AND IS AWAITING REPLIES. THOMAS WILL COORDINATE WITH UNHCR CONNECTION ANY AP- PROACHES TO GOVERNMENTS. THOMAS MENTIONED INTER ALIA POSSIBILITY OF APPROACHING LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS TO ASCERTAIN THEIR WILL- INGNESS TO ACCEPT THOSE INDOCHINESE REFUGEES MEETING CRITERIA OF ICEM'S SELECTIVE MIGRATION PROGRAM. MOREOVER, ICEM AGREED TO PURSUE THOS GOVERNMENTS WHICH REACT POSITIVELY TO USG'S BILATERAL

APPROACHES. MISSION KEEPING ICEM AND UNHCR AWARE OF REACTIONS TO THESE APPROACHES.

7. WE INFORMED ICEM OF CANADA'S INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT 1800 VIETNAMESE (PLUS FAMILY MEMBERS) WHO HAVE RECEIVED CANADIAN VISA LETTERS AND URGED ICEM TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF FACILITATING THE RESETTLEMENT OF THIS GROUP TO CANADA. ICEM READILY AGREED AND REQUESTS THAT ICEM GUAM TEAM BE GIVEN LIST OF THESE CASES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS GROUP COULD INVOLVE UP TO 10,000 PERSONS. SUGGEST THAT NAMES THESE CASES BE MADE KNOWN TO ICEM GUAM ASAP.

8. THOMAS STATED WILLINGNESS TO GEAR UP ICEM OPERATION GUAM IN ORDER ASSIST AS POSSIBLE IN RESETTLEMENT OF PERSONS DESTINED TO COUNTRIES OTHER THAN USA, AND TO ASSIST AS WELL WITH SORTING OF REFUGEE CATEGORIES.

9. THOMAS INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO COME TO WASHINGTON IF AND WHEN HIS VISIT MIGHT BE USEFUL. DALE

UNQUOTE. KISSINGER

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